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November 4, 2011

Dear Families,

I am so excited to send this note home because we are at a new point in Grade One and you get to be involved in your child’s education at home. We have been working on learning some of the sound pictures, and the students are practicing using these sounds to build words. I am including those sounds in this package so that you can continue this practice at home. Please remember that we are working with sounds, not letter names. The letter names do not help your child learn to read but the sounds the letters make do. When you ask them to build the word ‘cat’ they should say each sound as they build the word: ‘c’ ‘a’ ‘t’ , ‘cat’. Ask your child to teach you the sounds the letters say. You will find that the sounds are very short and precise and we often want to add the sound ‘u’ to consonants sound. For example, the letter c says does not say ‘cuh’. As we learn more letters, I will send home more sound picture cards for you to cut out and build words.

You will also find a sheet of sight words included in this package. Sight words are important because they are words that are included in daily reading and writing. When we look at these words we should know them by sight and not need to try and sound them out and many of them cannot be sounded out. I will be sending home a starter sheet for most of the students. This sheet has the first ten words on it. Please note that at school your child will be working on mastering five words at a time. When they can read a word to me three times in three different situations I will consider that word mastered and they will add a new word to their package. When they have five new words to work on, that list will come home. Please cut the words apart and have your child read them to you, go through the list a few times a day and mix up the words each time so they do not simply memorize the order. If you see the word in a book or on a box in your kitchen (or anywhere!) ask your child to read the word to you. If they can read the words in different situations you will know that they have mastered it!

Practicing these skills with your child will help them to become a fluent reader and writer. If you have access to the internet I will be putting some activities on our Wikispace(website): <http://wjbgrade1.wikispaces.com/> .

One last thing, please remember to check and sign your child’s agenda everyday. This is how I know you are aware of what is going on at school. Thank you!!)

Mrs. Lysitza